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KINSHASA PASS TO BRAZZAVILLE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/25/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [ASEC](#) [IV](#)
SUBJECT: COTE D'IVOIRE: INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP MEETING
RESCHEDULED, NEW YORK MEETING IN DOUBT

REF: ABIDJAN 947

Classified By: POL/ECON Jim Wojtasiewicz, reasons 1.5 (B) and (D).

11. (U) The next meeting of the International Working Group (IWG) has been postponed from September 1 to September 8. In his letter notifying IWG members of the change, Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) Pierre Schori explained that it was made at the request of Prime Minister Banny because Banny plans to host another meeting with the four principal Ivoirian political leaders in Yamoussoukro September 2.

12. (C) Mariama Bayard-Gamatie, Director of the Political Department at ONUCI (the UN Operation in Cote d'Ivoire), told us August 24 that the three principal opposition leaders -- former President Bedie, leader of the PDCI (Democratic Party of Cote d'Ivoire); former Prime Minister Ouattara, leader of the RDR (Rally of Republicans); and Guillaume Soro, leader of the rebel FN (New Forces) -- are balking at Banny's proposed September 2 meeting because they believe Banny has violated commitments made at previous such meetings and tilted too far in President Gbagbo's direction.

13. (C) Bayard-Gamatie also told us that the previous day, SRSG Schori had delivered a letter to President Gbagbo from Secretary General Annan, inviting Gbagbo to the planned

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September meeting in New York, on the margins of the General Assembly, to discuss Cote d'Ivoire (precise date not yet decided). She said Gbagbo told Schori he would respond to the invitation in about a week. Bayard-Gamatie said that the five principal Ivoirian political leaders and all the members of the AU Peace and Security Council were being invited to the New York meeting.

14. (C) Comment. We suspect Gbagbo is very reluctant to attend the New York meeting. He probably finds the idea of traveling all the way to New York for a meeting with his Ivoirian brothers unnecessary and demeaning. On the other hand, he insists adamantly that his mandate to remain in office derives from the Ivoirian constitution, not from the will of the international community, which runs counter to the idea of attending an international gathering to decide on his fate after October. He also may be wary of leaving his chair empty at this time of domestic political uncertainty -- the September 2002 coup attempt was launched while Gbagbo was outside the country in Italy. As suggested reftel, an AU-sponsored plan supported by the rest of the international community has the best chance of successfully moving the peace process forward. End Comment.
Hooks